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THE CHURCH OF CHRIST.

IN PROPHECY—NO. I.

THE law was the "*Schoolmaster*," to bring the Jews to Christ, Gal. 3. 27, but the Gentile strangers and foreigners, when the law was fulfilled and taken out of the way, were, with the Jews, "Built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone, in whom all the building fitly framed together, grew, into a holy temple in the Lord. Eph. 2, 19-21. The Father, was carefully training the Family of Abraham, for two thousand years, through the law economy, for appreciating the new and spiritual edifice, under Christ. All the appointments under Moses, were figures of the true tabernacle, not made with hands, but which came without observation, and grew up, as a spiritual institution to enlighten the world. The grandeur and transcendent glories of the new and living way, under Christ, cannot, however, be fully understood but through the law and the prophecies, as founded in the ages of the world that preceded present developments. While Greeks and Romans were unfriendly to the Jews, and especially to the Jewish prophets; there is not a remaining doubt that, all the impressions in reference to a future life, were through the light of the Old Testament Scriptures. Historians have generally agreed that, about the time of the birth of the Savior, there was a general and anxious expectation of the world that, a new era would soon dawn upon

the world. Plato's highest conceptions of God and the future, were doubtless from Moses and the prophets; and the visions of Virgil, Juneval and others, in regard to a golden age, were borrowed from Isaiah and Daniel. The prophecies were repeated in the oracles of the Sybils, or priesteses of the gods. The fact of a general anxiety regarding a great change in society anterior to the birth of Christ, no one denies. Our purpose is to examine with care the main passages of Scripture in reference to Jesus Christ and the kingdom under him. In reference to passages, or prophecies of doubtful bearing, we do not wish to occupy much space; but we are persuaded that, there are many important points clearly revealed and forcibly written in the Old Testament, demanding serious attention. The first passage, generally, quoted as a prophecy in regard to Christ and his reign, however, has never impressed us as it has others, and therefore, a brief notice must suffice.

God said to the Serpent that, deceived Eve, "Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle and above every beast of the field. Upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat, all the days of thy life. And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." Gen. 3, 14-15. We generally, find in our Hymn books, the couplet,

> "Behold the womans promised seed.
> Behold the Great Messiah come.."

We are not satisfied, the passage contains a promise of the Messiah; and are inclined to the conclusion, that, the Heavenly Father, in pronouncing the curse on the serpent, merely referred to the natural enmity that, exists between the offspring of the woman and the descendents of the serpent.

THE PROPHETIC VISIONS THROUGH ABRAHAM.

We are told, in the New Testament that, "The Scriptures foreseeing that, God would justify the nations through faith, announced before the Gospel to Abraham, saying, in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." This is also called, "The blessing of Abraham," and in the same connection, it is asserted that, "To Abraham and his seed, were the promises made." Gal. 3, 8-16. Two promises were made, to the Father of the faithful. First, said, Jehovah, "I will make of thee, a great nation," and

secondly, "In thee, shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Gen, 12, 2-3. There is no question that, the family of Abraham was to grow unto a very great nation, and there is as little doubt that, the Savior was to arise in his posterity.

The form of the promise, "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because thou hast obeyed my voice." Gen. 18, 18, seems to us to preclude the possibility that it had previously been made, in the denunciation upon the serpent, to Eve, or any other person. The promises were made to Abraham, not repeated—but were given.

THE VISION OF ISAAC.

To Isaac, the promises made to Abraham were repeated, with the addition that, they were given to the Father of the faithful, because he had, "obeyed the voice of God, had kept the charges, the commandments, statutes and laws." Gen. 26, 4.

THE VISION OF JACOB.

The next clear Prophetic view of the new order, is found in the blessing of Jacob on his son Judah, on the day he died. He said, "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a law giver from between his feet, till Shiloh come, and unto him shall the gathering of the people be." Gen, xlix. 10. Scholars have differed in regard to the meaning of the word, Shiloh, in this passage. There was a town north of Jerusalem, amongst the hills not far from Bethel in the land of Ephriam, called Shiloh. The first general peace, with the five Cananitish nations, seems to have been concluded at this place, when the Tabernacle of the Lord was reared and the Ark of the Covenant was placed in it. It is possible, these events had influence in fixing the name Shiloh, on this particular locality.

The word means peace, rest, or quietness. Josh. 18, 1; 1 Sam. 4, 3. The best critics agree that, the word denotes pacific—peaceable—and when applied to a person, it may be rendered, pacifier, or peace-maker. Jesus Christ was to be called, the "Prince of Peace." Is. 9, 6. A few quotations from the most ancient authorities may throw light on the subject. In the Septuagint, it is written, "A prince shall not fail from Judah, nor a captain from his loins, until the things come that are laid up for him." In the Targum of Onkelos, it is said, "One having a principality, shall

not be taken from the house of Judah, until the Messiah comes, whose the kingdom is." The Jerusalem Targum, says, "Kings shall not fail from Judah, till the king Messiah shall come." The Syriac reads, "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, till he comes, who has a right to the dominion." But all the Targums, the Vulgate, and the whole of the Jewish and christian writers agree that, the promised Shiloh, was to be a ruler, from the tribe of Judah. No other can answer the prediction, but Jesus—the Christ—even the skeptical Jews, must doubt, the appearance of another prince, to rule the tribes of Israel. We are disposed to agree with Baur, in Kitto, that no other has come under the character of Pacificator, Tranquillizer, Author of Peace, since the Messiah, whose character is presented in the New Testament.

All the facts of Jewish history, most perfectly harmonize with this view. The authority remains with Judah, from Jacob through Solomon and Rehoboam, to Christ, and in the greatest trials with the revolted tribes, and the nations of the earth, God had special regard to the single tribe of Judah. The whole history is but one unbroken and consistent argument in favor of the truth of the Old Testament records.

VISION OF MOSES.

The death of Jacob took place about 1689 years before the christian era, and the next intimation we have, of greater light, was in the vision of the Father in the burning bush. The angel said to Moses, while watching, in Midian, Jethro's flock, "I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob." Ex. 3, 6. The Savior, 1631 years afterwards, construed this vision into a promise that God would bring back the fathers from the dead, that they, were still living and would rise from the dead. But in the year 1451, before the birth of Christ, God, made a still more remarkable promise to Moses in the words, "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me, unto him ye shall hearken. I will put my words into his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I command him, and whosoever will not hear him, I will require it of him." Deut. 18, 15-19. Peter quoted this prophecy in his discourse from Solomon's portico. De. 3, 22.

From this production, our Lord intended to impress the truth on his disciples and the world, that the fathers—Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, though dead, were still alive. Of course, the purpose

was to show Moses that, there would be a returning to life, but how, or when, the servant of God, had no information. It was enough for him, and all interested, to understand that, the dead still lived, and of course, the inference was that all would return from the state of the dead. In Peters use of the prophecy, we have an earnest appeal to the Jews that, God was faithful to his promise, of one resembling Moses to arise, whose voice was to be heard. Whoever would not hearken to his teaching, was to be destroyed. We see all the vision fulfilled in the Messiah.

While Samuel is regarded as the first, in the regular line of prophets, it is difficult to trace any very pointed prediction from him, in reference to the new order. In Nathan, who lived a little after, and who was the personal associate of David, and a prophet of God, we see not any clear enunciation of the coming Prince of Peace.

THE VISIONS OF DAVID.

The predictions, however, through David, are numerous and valuable. We will give place to a few of the most striking. "Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things—the kings of the earth and the rulers, take counsel together against the Lord and against his Anointed. The Lord who sitteth in the heaven said, Yet, have I set my King, upon my holy hill of Zion, I will declare the decree; the Lord hath said unto me, thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee, ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potters vessel. Be wise, O ye kings, be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry. Blessed are they that put their trust in him," Ps. 2d.

Some of these allusions have been verified, and others, will be fulfilled hereafter. The heathen raged at Messiah, while on earth, the people imagined vain things; the rulers of the earth, took counsel together against the Lord and his Messiah; God set his King upon his holy hill of Zion; when he ascended to heaven. He was the first begotten from the dead. He, indeed, brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel. God has promised the nations, as an inheritance, to his Son, and he already possesses the best of the men and women of all the civilized earth, and all will yet acknowledge that, "Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." All are abundantly blessed, who put their trust in him.

We think it is scarcely possible, for any one familiar with the world's history, to doubt that, Jesus Christ, the beloved Savior, is not very fast bringing our rebellious race, under his dominion. During the last session of the Congress of the United States, there was a movement made, to acknowledge the authority of Jesus of Nazareth. How long before the living and dead, will stand up and confess the power of the Redeemer, we cannot imagine, but the Bible and the facts in the history of the nations, favor the result, and we doubt not every word spoken, will be fulfilled. All may not come to pass, just as we imagine, nevertheless, every prediction will be verified. The words used by the Savior on the cross, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me," were written by David 1000 years before Christ. Ps. 22d. In the same connection the Psalmist employed various expressions, which were fulfilled in the Messiah. We will notice a few. "All hey that see me, laugh me to scorn, they shoot out the lip, and wag the head." These sayings were fulfilled at the crucifixion. So was, "He trusted on the Lord that, he would deliver him; let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him." The Jews said, "He saved others, but himself he cannot save." Again, the sweet singer of Israel said, "I am poured out as water, and all my bones are out of joint; for dogs have compassed me, the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me—they pierced my hands and my feet." "They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture." These are the words of David, which were fulfilled by the highest Jewish authorities, at the cross of the blessed Savior. Finally in this prediction David wrote, "All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord; and all the kindreds of the nations, shall worship before thee. For the kingdom is the Lord's, and he is the governor among the nations." Ps. 22; 27-28.

Wonderful were the predictions regarding the Lord and his kingdom; but still more wonderful, has been the literal fulfillment of many of these predictions. Doubtless the following prophecies referred directly to Christ and his works. "The Lord" said David, "is my Shepherd, I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures, he leadeth me by the still waters. Yea, though I walk through the valley and shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me. Surely goodness and mercy, shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." Ps. 23,

In the next prediction of David, we have the finest description of the Lord's ascension on record. The heavenly choirs, who attended the Savior in his ascension, are represented as saying to the powers above, "Lift up your heads, O, ye gates, and be ye lifted up ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in." The inquiry from within is, "Who is this King of glory?" "The Lord, strong and mighty, the Lord, mighty in battle." The question was repeated, and the final response was, "The Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory." Ps. 24. God, the Father graciously received his Son, and seated him at his own right hand in the heavens, and said to him, "Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O, Most Mighty; with thy glory and thy Majesty, ride prosperously, because of truth and meekness and righteousness. Thy throne, O, God, is forever and ever, the sceptre of thy kingdom, is a right sceptre, thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity, therefore, God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." Ps. 45, 2-7. "Sit thou at my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool." Ps. 110, 1. The following prophecy, is another beautiful reference to the "Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ." "There is a river, the streams whereof, shall make glad the city of God; the holy place of the tabernacle of the Most High. God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved. Come behold, the works of the Lord, what desolations he hath made in the earth. He maketh wars to cease, unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire. Be still, and know that, I am God; I will be exalted among the nations." Ps. 46, 4-10. We gravely ask, if the Lord has not already caused wars to cease in the earth, in exact ratio, as the nations have come under the influence of the Prince of Peace? If so, will not all wars cease so soon, as the nations are leavened by the righteousness of the christian religion. Is it possible, for any servant of Jesus Christ to conclude, that the shedding of blood, is a christian service? We consider it, simply unchristian. It was promised that, "The Lord would send the strength of his rod out of Zion; rule thou, in the midst of thine enemies." Ps. 110, 2. By and through the church, God promised that, he would subdue the nations. His power was to go forth, from no other institution. In one of David's clearest visions of the Savior, he said, "The stone which the builders refused, is become the head of the corner." Ps. 118, 22. It is said that, when the temple of God by Solomon, was near its

completion, there was a vacant space, upon which the strength and beauty of the edifice mainly depended, but there could not a suitable stone be found. Finally, one, which to all seemed uncomely, and unsuited for any place—over which the workmen had long walked, was tried, and to the utter astonishment of all, it proved to be the key to the arch, and the chief glory of the edifice. Christ was despised, and rejected by men, and he is not yet loved by all; and still, he is the Rock, the Tried Stone, the head of the corner, though still rejected.

The 122d Psalm is too rich in promises, to pass it in silence. It reads, "I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord." This was nothing short of the spiritual house of which it is our highest earthly privilege, to be members. "Our feet shall stand within thy gates. O, Jerusalem, Jerusalem is builded as a city, which is compacted together." Paul says, "Jerusalem is the mother of us all." But David adds, "The tribes of the Lord, go up to Jerusalem, to give thanks unto the name of the Lord. For there are set thrones of judgment, the thrones of the house of David. Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem; they shall prosper that love thee. Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces. For my brethren and companions sake, I will now say, peace, be within thee. Because of the house of the Lord our God, I will seek thy good." So elevating, so life like a picture, of the temple reared by Christ, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to find elsewhere.

The closing pictures of the Psalmist ,we find in his last predictions. He says, "I have found David, my servant, with my holy oil, I have annointed him. The enemy shall not exact upon him, nor the son of wickedness afflict him. I will cast down his foes before his face, and plague them that hate him; in my name, shall his horn be exalted; I will make him my first love, higher than the kings of the earth. I will make his seed endure forever, and his throne as the days of heaven." Ps. 89, 20-24. For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways." Ps. 91, 11. Again, he says, "I will not give sleep to mine eyes, nor slumber to mine eye lids, until I find out a place for the Lord, a habitation for the Mighty God of Jacob. We will go into his tabernacles, we will worship at his footstool. The Lord hath chosen Zion, he hath desired it for his habitation. This is my rest forever; here will I dwell. I will abundantly bless her, provision: I will satisfy her poor with bread, I will clothe her

priests, with salvation; and her saints shall shout for joy. There will I make the house of David to bud; I have ordained a lamp for mine annointed. Behold, how good and pleasant it is, for brethren to dwell together in unity." Ps. 132 and 133. "Praise ye the Lord, for it is good to sing praises unto our God. It is pleasant, and praise is comely. Let every thing that hath breath, praise the Lord." But we must look at the prophecies of others.

We are not positive, there is a plain allusion in the writings of Solomon, to the church of God, or the Prince of life. It is however, supposed there is reference possibly to the Savior, in the words, "I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was; when there were no depths, I was brought forth, when no fountains abounded with water; When he prepared the heavens, I was there; when he appointed the foundations of the earth; then I was by him, and my delights were with the sons of men; and he that findeth me findeth life." To our mind, the passage seems to be a soliloquy of Solomon to wisdom.

"THE VISION OF ISAIAH, SON OF AMOS," 760 B. C.

"*Hear O heavens and give ear O earth, for the Lord hath spoken.*" After serious complaints on account of the apostacy of Judah and Jerusalem, the prophet said, "It shall come to pass, in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be in the top of the mountains; and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many shall say, come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for out of Zion, shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. He shall judge among the nations, and rebuke many people; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." Isaiah 2, 1-4. There is possibly not in the Sacred Scriptures, a more perfect picture, and yet, a more systematieally detailed prediction in reference to the reign of Jesus Christ, than in this passage. As we are endeavoring to present the church of God, and to determine what is true and false, regarding church history, deem it proper to submit somewhat systematically, the teaching of the prophet, in the passage.

We would respectfully inquire what is meant by

THE LAST DAYS?

We find various expressions, in the Old Testament, such as, "Last Days," "Latter Days," etc., most of which have reference to a new order of things; and Peter, in quoting the passage, on Pentecost, applied it directly to the achievements of the Christian dispensation. While we desire not to speak too confidently, we are satisfied, the expression amongst the Prophets, referred to the coming kingdom under Christ; and we are quite as well settled in the judgment, that amongst New Testament writers, there was a full agreement that, the Christian dispensation was intended as the last trial state, and with its close the drama of human existence, was to close. Therefore, we anticipate no new developments, and should any angel, or spirit, add in the least, to the perfect provision through the Savior, for man's redemption, universal doubt must arise in the world. We look for the scene to close with, "*The fullness of the Gentiles*," which cannot, in our view, be very far distant. The Jews have had their trial, and the Gentiles are now on trial.

The word *mountain*, is employed in the Scriptures, to denote strength, power, influence and dominion; and the purpose of the prophet was, to place the power of the church above all other moral forces and influences. Hence, it was to be exalted above the hills, and all nations were to flow unto it. Many people have for eighteen hundred years, gone up to, "The mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob," and many are still, "walking in his ways." But we would inquire, especially, as to what is meant by the expression, "Out of Zion, shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem?"

The law of pardon, of remission of sins, of salvation, no one could understand, till Peter stood up on the day of Pentecost, and spake as the spirit gave him "utterance." The disciples were all, unedueated and ignorant men; and if they had been the best educated men on earth, they would not have been able to tell a sinner what to do to be saved. It was not, in the law or prophets. The information was to be given directly from heaven. The servants of God could not learn the truth by studying, and hence, they were told not even to "premeditate," and to be assured, it was not they, but the spirit that, would speak through them. To these

matters, it will be necessary to refer when we look at the "beginning," of the church, or examine the origin of the house of God or kingdom of heaven.

The most noted elevation in Jerusalem, "The City of the Great King," is called, "Mount Zion," and oftentimes, the whole city is designated "Mount Zion," The prophet simply affirmed that, "the law," of the new religion, should "go forth out of Zion, and, the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." God, made choice that the Jews and Gentiles, should hear from the mouth of Peter, the Apostle—first, the words of reconciliation. The matter upon which we would be most pleased to make an impression, in the prophecy, is the influence of the religion when introduced. The subjugated were to beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks, and the nations were to learn war no more. In a like quotation, from the Psalms of David, we have mentioned the fact of the anti-war effect of the christian religion upon the first converts, and we may now add that, nations in exact proportion, as the Spirit of Christ operates, lose their taste for shedding blood. No truly christian people, thirst for the blood of their fellow beings.

So soon as nations shall listen to the exhortation, "Let us walk in the light of the Lord," peace and good will, must abound in the world. In another chapter the Prophet in addressing the house of David, said, "The Lord himself, shall give you a sign. Behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name, Immanuel. Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil and choose the good. Isaiah 7, 14. This was literally fulfilled 742 years after the prediction, through Mary, the espoused of Joseph.

Another very noted vision of the Prophet is in the words, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace, there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom to order it, and to establish it, with judgment and justice, from henceforth, even forever." Isaiah 9, 6-7. The "Child Jesus," was evidently predicted, and the "Son given" was acknowledged as the beloved of the Father, at the Jordan; and the "government," placed upon his shoulders, when he ascended on high and the Father added, "Sit thou on my right hand, till I

make thine enemies thy foot stool." "Rule thou in the midst of thine enemies." While on earth he could not be a priest, neither could he be a king, till crowned by the Father, and the sceptre was placed in his hand. He was "Wonderful," in all his manifestations, from his conception, birth and baptism, till he ascended to heaven from the Mount of Olives. At twelve years of age, amongst the learned doctors of the Law, he proved himself, a "Counsellor," superior to all others. He was pronounced, "The Mighty God," in consequence of the inheritance from the Father, which entitled him to his name, and as Lowth renders the Hebrew, he was, "The Father of the everlasting age," because he was "The Alpha and the Omega," of the Christian dispensation. There are a few other items, in this prediction, to which we desire to call very special attention. "Of the increase of his government and peace, there shall be no end." Can those who have confidence in the promises of God, entertain a doubt, as to the increase, and final triumph of the government of the Messiah? Can we doubt the peaceful tendencies of his holy religion? We mean, over all, who are under its influence.

God promised David that after he should sleep with his fathers, he would "Set up his seed after him, to build a house for his name, and he would establish the throne of his kingdom forever." 2 Sam. 7, 12. "The tabernacle of David, after falling down, was to rise again, as quoted by Simeon, Ac. 15, 14-16. Hence, it is not strange that, Isaiah should mention, his occupation of the throne of David.

But one of the most striking items of the prophecy, is that, He whose right it was to rule, was to "Order it" or ordain the order of the edifice. Those who imagine the order of the divine service, is left to the wisdom of men, should study this item with great care. To us, it seems clear, the order of the spiritual temple, is more perfect, than that which was adumbrated in the tabernacle service, ordained in the wilderness. But he was not only to supervise the order of the kingdom, but was to "Establish it, with judgment and justice forever." Can the teachers of the nineteenth century believe that, the order of the christian service, is given in detail, and the administration of justice is fully provided for, in the body, without the creation of church courts, by fallible men? Isaiah next pronounced a "Woe upon them, that decree unrighteous decrees, write grievousness, which they have prescribed, to turn aside the needy from judgment, and to take away the right from the poor of my people, that widows may be

their prey, and that they may rule the fatherless." This looks very much like the work of the many religious hierarchies that, are at present, usurping the throne of God. The vision in the eleventh chapter, is perhaps, as beautiful, rich and lovely, in all its bearings, as any other in God's Oracles. We cannot pass it, without grouping a few of its most striking features.

"A rod shall come out of the trunk, (Lowth) of Jesse and a scion from his roots; the Spirit of the Lord shall be upon him—the Spirit of wisdom, understanding, counsel and might and knowledge of the fear of the Lord. He shall judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek; he shall smite with the rod of his mouth; and righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins. The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, the Leopard with the Kid; and a little child shall lead the young lion, the calf and the fatling; the cow and the bear shall feed together; their young shall lie down together, and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The child shall play upon the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand upon the Adders den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea. The nations shall repair to the root of Jesse, who shall stand as an ensign to the people: and his resting place shall be glorious. In him shall the Gentiles trust. The Lord shall gather together his dispersed people, from the four corners of the earth, and they shall fly towards the west. The Lord shall utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea, and with his mighty wind, he shall shake his hand over the river, (Nile,) smite its seven streams and make men go over dry shod. There shall be a high way for the remnant of his people, like it was to Israel, in the day he came out of Egypt." Many grave questions might be profitably discussed, in regard to these wonderful predictions, but we will offer a few conclusions, without submitting our reasons for them.

In the first place, we think there is no doubt that, the Mighty One, who was to accomplish this astonishing revolution in society, is the Lord Jesus Christ. We doubt, as little, in the second place that, all these things were promised in the Christian dispensation; and many of them, have been accomplished. The spirit of wisdom, knowledge and counsel is manifest in all the administration of his church. By the rod of his mouth, multitudes have been smitten and subjugated. Men of tempers as fierce as the wolf, lion and bear, have been tamed, and so christianized that, they could hurt no one.

God protects his servants as he does the innocent and helpless child. They see him not, and often fail to render the thanks due. In all the kingdom of the saints, no one seeks the injury of another. But while christians are wise to see what is good, and to do good to all, the knowledge of the Lord has not yet filled the whole earth, as the waters cover the sea. Yet through the sacred influence of the Christian institution, we cannot doubt, all will be fulfilled. We think it quite probable, the prediction in reference to the destruction of the "Tongue of the Egyptian sea," to afford a highway for passing, was fulfilled in the construction of the canal from the Red to the Mediteranean sea in 1870. It is said, they should go over "dry shod," but the word translated from Hebrew, is elsewhere rendered, inclosed. It is most likely. the idea is that, of passing by a highway, barred, or inclosed, as in vessels.

The simple and uuvarnished statement of the Prophet, is to replete with valuable instruction, touching the spiritual influences of the kingdom of the Savior, that to fully acquire it, we should not hesitate to give the assiduous labor of the longest life.

All that was ever intended by the Christian religion, is beautifully shadowed forth in this single chapter.

A NEW DEPARTURE FROM ENGLISH EPISCOPACY, IN TENNESSEE.

We consider it in strict accordance with the purposes of our labor, to notice, in a respectful manner, every religious movement calculated in any way to operate either for weal or woe, upon society. While we cannot rejoice, in the controversies of any religious people, we take the deepest interest in every movement, which promises opposition to any system of Ecclesiasticism, which we regard at war with the church of God. We have not doubted, that, the Romish hierarchy stands in deadly hostility to Christ, and we have doubted as little that, the Ritualistic phase of English Episcopacy, is equally unfriendly to the genius and spirit of the reign of the Messiah.

Our friends, in the Episcopal church, have often spoken to us in reference to the independent modes of thinking and earnest labors of Mr. W. C. Ellis, Rector—in a style which has not failed

to create in our mind an unusual interest in his movements. On the 24th of Nov. 1872. Mr. Ellis, delivered to his parishioners, at St. Anne's Church, Edgefield, a discourse, which has found its way into our newspapers, that reveals, not only a remarkable departure from the mother church, but so far as we are able to judge, the sermon really indicates a movement Zionward. Quite a sufficiency of a negative character, at least, has been said, to satisfy all that, Mr. E. feels but little respect for the dogmatism of Rome, or her daughters; but whether, he will be satisfied with the simple teaching of Christ and the Apostles, as set forth in the New Testament, and the spiritual forms of the Jerusalem model, time alone must reveal. His language is clear, strong and defiant; and to us, he really speaks as one who is in earnest. We hope he is a good man, and we will cheerfully hear him.

He says, "I made up my mind that the view of christianity which made the church mean the clergy, and the sacraments the beginners and sustainers of spiritual life and character, is anti-christian." If this conclusion is correct, official grace, in Romish and other bodies, has no value. Again, Mr. E. says, "I decided that, Sectarianism, is certainly untrue and pernicious." What will the denominations say to this? Are, any of us, ready for it? Worse still, Mr. E. says, "I do not believe in these dogmatic schemes, I believe that, to attach any practical importance to them has always been, and always must be an evil." Explanations are unnecessary. On the positive side of the question, Mr. Ellis, expresses the hope that, "The earnest investigations of the times, will result in deepening, enlarging and intensifying our religious convictions, and that the church of the future, will be one of more earnest and active faith than that of Oxford, Rome or Geneva." We respectfully suggest to Mr. Ellis that, if he anticipates the church of the future, to arise from investigations of science, superior to Oxford, Rome and Geneva, he will be mistaken; but if he can afford to walk in the footsteps of the lowly Redeemer, we doubt not his highest hopes will be fully realized. "The weakness of God, is stronger than men."

A Good Text—"You cannot serve God and Mammon."

SECOND VOLUME

OF

THE RELIGIOUS HISTORIAN.

To the Friends of God:

NEVER before, have we so sensibly felt the responsibility which rests upon us, for what we write; and never have we so earnestly desired, the encouragement of good men. We have offered our services, as a teacher of the Elements of the Christian religion; and now propose, to give, in the Volume of 1873, as perfect a representation of the Church of Christ—fully organized—as the Sacred Scriptures authorize. Should we be mistaken in any of our conclusions, others will likely suffer loss, from our defects; and hence, we would be most thankful, for the friendly, yea—brotherly suggestions of any of our co-laborers in the kingdom of Christ. It will be our highest ambition, to present the true frame work of the Christian fabric on the foundation God laid in Zion; and to picture forth the life, the spirit, the vital energy, and the mission of the Church of the blessed Savior. If we could conclude that, the church could be seen in the Romish mistress, or in any of her offspring, we would gladly say so; or, if we could reconcile it to our faith, that human wisdom could construct any true likeness, of the spiritual temple, we would rely on it as a safe teacher. Moreover, if we could conclude that, God could be honored through human organizations, churches or moral societies, we would be far from opposing them. We are laboring under the abiding impression, whether true or false, that Jesus Christ, did establish upon this earth, a working organization, called his "spouse," "his church," into which it is absolutely necessary to enter to be saved, to live the christian and to prepare for heaven. If we are mistaken in these conclusions, they are honest mistakes; but if we have been fortunate in coming to correct conclusions, upon no plan, but by living fully up to the requirements of the church, and to the spiritual life revealed in the Scriptures, can we, or others, attain to eternal life. If we believed Christianity existed in denominationalism, we could not, and would not oppose it; but under the solemn conviction that the religion of Christ, is purer, more elevating, more enobling and much more like God, we simply desire to be a Christian, and

say to our contemporaries, "This is the way," "Walk ye in it," 'God's ways are not our ways," and God's plans are not like the plans of men.

We say to the Brethren, to christians everywhere, that, we are quite sure, we have no theory to establish; and no plans of our own, which we desire to recommend. We, it is true, have not been able to see as others, seem to see. We have not seen, for instance, greater perfection in the Romish hierarchy, or in Protestantism, than was manifested in the plain disciples of Christ in the first century. Instead, of reasoning that the church has grown wiser, purer and more lovely, in the ages, that have elapsed since Peter, John, Paul and Timothy, we are impressed that, for the purest church model, we are to look back to Jerusalem; and for the wisest men, and purest society, we are to turn our eyes to the christians of the first century.

We have thought proper to say these things, merely to intimate to our readers. that, we are not so vain, as to imagine, we have any thing new to offer; or that we are prepared to admit the speculative systems of the age, are in any wise, superior to the church of the first century. From our standpoint, they constitute the great apostacy. Hence, it is our purpose, to give our second year's labor, to the history of the religion of Jesus Christ, as it appeared in the Apostolic age. Who will help us?

READING THE SCRIPTURES.

In our experience, as preacher and writer, our only sure evidence of success has been manifested, by a spirit of anxiety with hearers and readers, to understand the truth. Converts made in ignorance, are but way-side hearers, who comprehend not the words, which are comparable to good seed that are picked up by the birds of the air. In the revival systems of the Protestant denominations, we presume, not one in ten, is able in three months to desire even, in the words of Mr. Wesley, to "*Flee from the wrath to come.*" It was likely from the fact that, so few of the converts, from eanimal xcitement, remained serious, that the practice of receiving members upon "six month's trial" was adopted. We do not affirm that, every one who understands the truth, when

he enlists in the army of the faithful, perseveres in well doing to the end of his journey. Fleshly habits, are so strong that, many persons of sound judgment and determined will, are not able to stand. Intoxicating drinks, and the use of narcotics, fail not to exert a detrimental influence, on those who permit themselves to touch, or handle any one of them. We cannot see how any one can be saved from the dominion of the flesh, without constant devotion to the truth, as it is written; and fervently looking to God in prayer, night and day, for grace. But while it must be admitted, the world is enveloped in darkness, we gravely ask the teachers of religion, upon what grounds are we to hope for the salvation of the nations? Paul's mission was, "To turn the lost from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God." Do not these words plainly teach that, men are turned from the power of Satan to God, by the enlightening of the eyes of their understanding? "The good heart," in the days of the Savior, was the "Honest and understanding heart." David says, "The entrance of thy word, giveth light; it giveth understanding to the simple."

To us, it seems useless to excite any people upon the subject of religion, when the proper plan is not adopted, to enlighten and purify the heart. The idea, of purifying a soul in gross ignorance of truth, and completely under the dominion of the impulses of the flesh, seems worse than vain. Not only is a knowledge of the truth necessary, to turn the ignorant from sin; but it is also quite as important, to spread the light of truth among the professors of religion generally, to secure such a concert of religious influence, as will materially benefit our race. Learned and labored discourses, to a people that do not investigate, is simply, "casting pearls before swine." Elaborate essays upon difficult subjects, afford not the slightest morsel of spiritual food to the ignorant. We have suggested these plain truths, to stimulate, if possible, students of the Scriptures, and especially professed christians, earnestly and prayerfully to seek after the truth. It is very difficult, indeed, for any one trained under the bewitching influence of a modern system of religion, to sufficiently doubt the truth of his position, to enable him, to believe all systems, and all dogmatic theology, to the pure fountain and source of spiritual light.

It is also, a very dangerous error for any one to conclude, that he can become a great scholar, or successful in any department of learning, without effort. Earnest head and heart labor, is indis-

pensable, in the acquisition, of such a knowledge of subjects spiritual, as will insure confidence in our position. We wish to suggest to our readers, in commencing our Second Volume, that it is our sincere desire to present the main elements of the christian institution, in such a manner, as will enable all students of the Bible to see eye te eye, and to speak the same things. We can, however, hope for such results, alone upon the condition, that we all forget our prejudices, diligently examine each point for ourselves, and then possess the honesty of purpose to admit the force of truth, as it presents itself to our understanding.

IS IT TRUE? WHOSE FAULT? WHAT THE REMEDY?

In the "CLOSING SUGGESTIONS," of Bro. Moses E. Lard, in the "Apostolic Times." for Dec. 26th, 1872, we notice some conclusions in regard to the condition of the churches, of so startling a character that, we can but inquire if they are true?

What he calls, "The first evil, is, the large number of unworking members." "In almost all the churches," he says, "Three or four men, do all the work, and the rest are literally idlers. Not among all the chnrches in my knowledge," he adds, "can I call to mind one that, has in it, one dozen of really active, working men. To remedy this evil, should with us, become a study." What he denominates, "The second evil is, the want of self-supporting ability." He urges that, "There are hundreds of churches all over the land which, if the preacher, or chief elder, happens to be absent, have to adjourn, and leave the loaf unbroken."

Having taken upon ourself the responsibility of religious chronicler, both of the past, and present, and sincerely desiring to direct our readers in the ways of truth, we consider it but justice to the cause of genuine christianity, to look at these statements without prejudice. As to the truth of the conclusions, we are sorry to admit, there cannot exist the shadow of a doubt; but the question is, who are to blame for the spiritual death of ninety-seven hundredths of professed christians? We need scarcely intimate that, Bro. Lard, has for a number of years, resided at Lexington Ky., and been acknowledged one of our ablest preachers and writers. His candor, no one can doubt; and his

means of information, are equal to any other teachers in the land It should be remembered too, that, Lexington is the seat of Kentucky University, by far the most popular Literary Institution under the influence of professed christians, and the location of our most reputable Bible College, under the directon of Brethren Robt. Milligan and J. W. McGarvey.

If in churches numbering from one to five hundred, from "three to a dozen," *live, working* members only, are usually found, should we not seriously question whether the plan, upon which we are operating is divine? We should remember that, in Kentucky, in addition to the influence of our most respected University and Bible College, the brethren have had the full advantage of all the Missionary Societies, and the "Louisville plan" of sounding out the Gospel, and an amount of preaching talent equal, if not superior to any other State; and if all have failed to build up a single living, working congregation, we should think, it is high time for the teachers to re-examine the machinery employed in the work. Does the report contain the *neplus ultra* of our success in reformation? The statements made by our Brother Lard are not only true, in refcrence to Kentucky and Missouri, but we presume they are directly applicable to most of the churches in every section of the land. We have at present but a single suggestion to offer. In our view of the christian religion, our people have made a fatal blunder, in attempting to build up the cause of Christ hy *offieial*, instead of *Christian* labor. One of our purposes, in the publication of the Religious Historian, is to examine this question. We wish to take no part in building up a new "*hierarchy*," or another powerful "*denomination*," containing only from, "*three to a dozen*," live members to the hundred. The fewer preachers, we prepare for this character of work, the better for the cause of Christ, and humanity. In the days of Apostles, "Lively stones, built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God, by Jesus Christ." 1 Pet. 2, 5.

The introduction of hnman devices amongst us, has materially interferred with our spiritual progress. Hence, the sad picture that meets our eyes, look in whatever direction we may. When good men, however, can but see the evils suggested, by Bro. Lard, will they not stop to consider the cause of our failure, and in love, unite to remove it? The main work for the present generation, is to learn, practically, the meaning of the spiritual house, Christ came to build. Our Brother Editor, has struck in the right di-

rection. Who will help, remedy the evils that, exist amongst christians? Come, brethren, let us reason together. We know that, our chart is right, and that, we started in the "straight and narrow road," but now it behoves us, to study well our mistakes in the Lord's work.

WITCHCRAFT, SPIRITUALISM AND NECROMANCY.

One Simon, of olden times, "In giving out that, he himself, was the great power of God, bewitched the people of Samaria." Ac. 8, 9. Joseph Smith, Jr. by satisfying his friends that, God made revelations to him on plates that had long been concealed in the earth, led captive at his will, thousands of ignorant people, into degrading, fleshly relations. Some months since, a singularly, crafty man, for the sake of pelf, by boasting of his wonderful spiritual tricks, in the cure of sin sick souls, quite bewildered hundreds of innocent persons in our country. He was rewarded with treasures, so rich, that it might be said of him, as was said of certain Pharisees, he has, his reward. The first week in January, 1873, C. H. Foster, of New York, of world wide notoriety and fame, spent in our city. If we are correctly informed, he is the most remarkable Spiritualist and Necromancer of the age; and it is not surprising that, many of our respectable citizens should have been quite overwhelmed, at his strange performances. Had Mr. F. proposed to test his art, before the public, we might have considered it our duty to be present, but as his *seances*, were in secret, we deemed it improper, in the circumstances to attend.

Some of our friends, however, for whom we have high regard, have respectfully asked our judgment, in reference to the profession of Spiritualism and Necromancy. While we cheerfully comply, we cannot promise to account for all the tricks of ancient, or modern professional deceivers, and in our short space, it would not be well, to attempt even a brief history of any occult art. At present, we can promise little more than a plain statement of a few questions, and our conclusions regarding the truth of them.

Mr. Foster, we learn, professes to be a "*Spiritual Medium.*" This means that, he is a medium of communication between the spirits of dead people, and their living friends on earth. We are informed he professes Necromantic skill, in foretelling future

events; and thus, in serving his friends, in makiug advantageous bargains in trade. If we have not been misinformed, quite prominent gentlemen, have become thoroughly satisfied as to his skill in his art, that they are more than willing, to vest their capital on his recommendation. In the broadest sense, Spiritualism, may possibly be applicable, to some of the supposed marvelous, religious influences of the age.

In Swedenborgianism, Quakerism, Shakerism, Second Adventism, and Modern Revivalism, there is a plain and full profession, of *direct spiritual light*, from the invisible world. Nine tenths of our people—yea, ninety-nine hundreds of us—were born and reared under this influence. We class all influences of the character intimated, under the general head of Spiritualism, and from their general popularity, they are entitled to respectful consideration. From the remarkable progress of modern Spiritualism, also, within the past quarter of a century,and from the fact that many of our people, are ready to listen to its promptings, we see no alternative, but for religious teachers, to look the subject squarely in the face. It must be answered, or we who profess to believe in the christian religion must abandon the faith which we have taught, was "once for all delivered to the saints,"

The great matter now, is to satisfy our friends as to the truth of direct spiritual communications in modern times, whether from the spirits of the dead, angels, or God. Do the people of the nineteenth century, receive, in any manner whatever, revelations, in addition to those recorded in the Bible? Are such professedly new revelations necessary? Correct answers to these questions, would settle all controversies on the subject.

We are fully satisfied that, from the death of the Apostle John, or from about the close of the first century, to this hour, not a single thought, word or communication, has been made from the invisible world, to mortal man. We are moreover, fully satisfied, that all professions of revelations for the past eighteen hundred years, through the spirits of dead, or living beings, through *feelings*, *impulses*, *words*, or *signs*, *inward* or *outward*, have been the result of gross ignorance, or influences, to say the least, which are not divine, or at all calculated to improve the spiritual condition of the world. No one can possibly seek, or even tolerate the idea of new spiritual light, from any source whatever, without fully renouncing all that God revealed to the world through his ancient prophets, through his beloved Son our Savior, and his holy Apostles,

Are we asked to account for the *phenomena* of modern spiritual-

ists, jugglers, necromancers and fortune tellers? We admit no *phenomena.* There are tricks, which we have not studied, and of course, profess not to understand; but we affirm that, there is nothing new in modern spiritualism. We think that, we know as much of the art, as most experts in the profession, and we are free to declare, it is a shallow conceit, in our candid judgment, an impious profession, and is most demoralizing whenever, and wherever tolerated. Will the people of Nashville, remember the career of an ill fated man who led many into the delusion some twenty years ago. Will the people of Boston and New York—of America, remember that Mr. Foster, is the boasted oracle of the School of the American Spiritualist, at whose head, if we are correctly informed, stands the noted Victoria C. Woodhull.

The struggle now is to satisfy our people that, God spake, *all his will* through his Son, his prophets and Apostles—that the Bible is the only true source of spiritual light, and that, all pretensions since the Book of God was given, of new and superior revelations, are *false*—are the result of wickedness and ignorance, and should not be countenanced by good people. It is indeed, a great shame, for professed disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ, for men of science, or people of good report, to listen to the fleshly promptings of the intolerable seducers of the age.

It might be proper, in conclusion, to say that, we have no doubt Mr. Foster is a man of remarkable *physical* organization. He can doubtless tell things of which he is as profoundly ignorant as he is of the cause af the magnetic needles pointing to the north pole We have as little doubt that, he is a man solely under the influence of fleshly promptings, and that, finally, a full solution of what are now called spiritual phenomena, will be attained only through a better acquaintance with frail humanity.

CHRISTMAS.

THE advent of the Savior into our world of sin and sorrow, is supposed to have taken place, on Christmas night eighteen hundred and seventy-two years ago. The event was announced by an angel of God, and with him, was a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God, and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, on

earth, peace and good will to men." Those who first heard the glad tidings, went in haste, to the city, and found, wonderful to tell; the Son of Mary—the Scn ot God. We speak with certainty of the year that marked his coming, but not of the day. We cannot affirm the 25th of December, brought to our suffering world so rich a boon.

Ancient writers deny it. They say, "The birth of Christ took place, when shepherds could remain in the ffelds, to watch their flocks, and these flocks were always sheltered before the rains that fell in the month of October. If this was the case, they could not have been in the fields at night, near the last of December.

Christmas day was observed centuries before the birth of Christ. A writer in the British Millenial Harbinger, says, "It was kept in honor of an infant God and his Mother. Under the name of the "Mother of the Gods, the Goddess Queen of Babylon and also, her son, were objects of almost universal adoration, and a festival was kept in honor of his birth, long before the birth of Christ. Egypt, Greece, Rome, Britain, the Persians, Syrians and other nations followed the example of Babylon. Tacitus speaks of the worship of these divinities. Herodotus enlarges upon it. Cæsar found their priests—the Druids in Britain when he invaded the country. In Egypt, they were adored under the names of Isis and Osiris. They were worshipped in India, and appeared in Pagan Rome, as Fortuna and the boy Jupitcr. Ceres —the Great Mother, and the child Plutus were objects of reverence in Greece. The same writer remarks, "The Jesuit Missionaries, when first in Asia, were astonished to find the counterpart of their Madonna and child, worshipped with as much devotion in China and Japan, as in Papal Rome itself."

"The Holy Mother, Sing Moo, was represented in China, with a child in her arms, and the glory around her head, as in Roman Catholic pictures. It may be asked, What has this to do with our Christmas day? Our Christmas was, as before remarked, kept in honor of the birth of the Son of the Goddess Queen, centuries before the birth of Christ. Some of the ancient writers say, "In the third century *after* the birth of Christ, this worship of the Mother and the Son was transferred from pagan idolatry. The names were changed, and Mary and her Son Jesus were adored by many, in the same idolatrous manner, as were the Goddess Queen and her Son.

The name shows a Pagan origin. Yule is the Chaldee for little

child, giving the idea that the Babylonians celebrated it in honor of a child. The pictures of the Mother also, show a Pagan origin.

All know that Mary, the mother of Jesus, belonged to a race of dark eyes and raven locks. Raphael, the great painter, of Italy, found the pictures representing her with, blue eyes and yellow hair, answering to the description of the golden haired goddess queen of Babylon. Some of the most beautiful pictures of the Madonna in Italy, are in this style. In Ireland, she is always so represented. Raphael first painted her as a Jewess. The Madonnas found in the ruins of Ancient Babylon, are golden haired and blue eyed. The presumption is, that those of Italy and Babylon were all copied from the same original. No other conclusion can be arrived at.

How the day was celebrated in Babylon. It was marked by the drunkenness and revelry, now, seen, in our country. The bowl of Christmas had its counterpart in the drunken festival of the grand old city, now lying in utter ruin, and every day showing the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy. "The owls shall dwell there and the satyrs shall dance there."

How Christmas was kept in Rome. In Papal Rome drunkenness and revelry prevailed. The wax candles lighted on the altars on Christmas Eve, were lighted by the Pagans on the altar of their God. The writer we have quoted concludes that, "Christmas was originally a *pagan* festival, and was not observed as the birth day of Christ, until nearly three centuries after his death.', If it had been important for us to know his birth day, no doubt, it would have been revealed. There is now, as in the olden time, so much revelry and drunkenness in the observance of Christmas, that the Savior is dishonored not only by his enemies, but in the house of his friends.

C, F.

D'ONT DRINK.

YOUNG men and boys who have ambition to form characters worthy of respect, should resolve, "By the help of the Lord, we will not this year, for the purpose of drinking. touch, taste, or handle the beverage, that leads to death—death temporal and eternal."

It is almost useless to speak of the danger a young man or an old one is in when he wants one dram per day for the feeling it produces, or to tell him he will soon be obliged to have two, and then half a dozen to make him any ways comfortable. If he could form an idea of the misery, the anguish of the confirmed dram drinkers, when he comes to himself, and reflects on his condition, I think it would make some stop and think. They would turn from the wine as it moves in flashing beauty and fragrance as from the deadliest poison. They would each, determine "I will not fill a drunkards grave." The beginning of a new year seems to be a suitable time to form resolutions—the time to quit bad habits, and to establish characters worthy of honor and respect. If young persons have indulged in what is wrong, it is the time to turn from the error of their ways—to gain their own self respect and the confidence of others. While I think of it, I heard not long since, of a young friend of mine, who was at a distance from his home. He was politely invited to a room, where a number of young men had collected for the purpose of drink and card playing. The door was locked and every effort used but to no effect, to make him participate with them. He said, "Gentlemen I do not engage in these practices." That young man respects himself, and will have the confidence of those who trust him. Persons who so act, can lift up their heads, can walk erect, and fear no discovery of hidden wrongs. But to go back to our subject.

I think the sad experience of a man of genius, a man of the noblest feelings, and greatly beloved by all who knew him, will perhaps touch the hearts of the young, more than anything I can say. It is the experience of Charles Lamb, and should be read over and over again. To me, there is deep pathos in his history. He says, "Twelve years ago, I was possessed of a healthy frame of mind and body. I arose early, summer and winter, and awoke refreshed, seldom without some merry thoughts in my head, or a piece of a song to welcome the new born day." Oh, if a wish could transport me back to those days of youth, when a draught from a clear spring could shake any heats that summer suns or active exercise had power to stir up in the blood, how gladly would I return to thee, pure element, the drink of children, and holy child like hermit. In my dreams, I sometimes fancy thy cool refreshment purling over my burning tongue, but, my waking stomach rejects it. That which refreshes innocence, only makes me sick and faint. I did not, in those happy days know what it

was to be sick. Now, except when I am losing myself in a sea of drinks. I am never free from those uneasy sensations in head and stomach, that are so much worse to bear, than any definite pains or aches. Now, the first feeling that besets me, after lying as late as possible, is a forecast of the wearisome day before me, with a secret wish that I could have lain on still or never awaked,

My waking life has much of contusion—the confusion of an ill dream. In the day, I stumble on dark mountains. Business wearies and perplexies me. Application kills me. The noble passages of authors that once delighted, now, draw from me, only a few weak tears allied to dotage. I am perpetually in tears, for any cause or none.

I have told only a small part of his sufferings arising from indulgence in drinks. He advises young men to stop, to begin a reformation, and custom will make it easy." The beginning will be dreadful, not like climbing a hill, but going through a fire like being flayed alive, still, there is hope no where else. Lamb went too far to reform. He tells that he would try to abstain for one night only, when he knew drink would deepen his gloom, rather than brighten it, but the necessity of getting rid of the present weight of misery, was so strong, he could not help screaming aloud for the anguish and pain of the strife within him. He asks, "Is there no middle way between total abstinence, and the excess which kills? For your sake, reader, and that you may never attain to my experience, with pain. I must utter the dreadful truth, there is none that I can find." I weep when I think of my condition. The waters have gone over me, but out of the black depths, could I be heard, I would call aloud to all who have but set a foot in the perilous flood. Could the youth, to whom the flavor of his first wine, is delicious as the opening scenes of life, or some newly discovered paradise, look into *my* desolation, and be made to know what a dreary thing it is for a man to go down a precipice, with no power to stop—to feel all the goodness emptied out of him and remember when he was innocent and happy; it would be enough to make him dash the sparkling beverage to the earth, in all the pride of its mantling temptation."

I have seen some who were almost as miserable as Lamb. I remember a family of boys, fine, healthy and noble looking. Their mother took pleasure in giving them every thing they loved to eat and to drink. Rich cordials and good wines were at their command. Plain and simple fare, such as most boys relish, had

no charms for them. When they left their home, they enjoyed high living with strong drink, and are now in the "black depths." Lamb speaks of not many weeks ago, I saw a young mother give her little boy cordial, as if it had been water. I thought, "he will make your heart ache, my friend."

If the effect of strong drink, were confined to this world only—if it effected only the body, it would not be so terrible, but Eternity is so long! What is so fearful as the thought of eternal ruin, to one possessed of many noble principles—of the refinement which leads him to associate only with the pure, refined and intellectual? This for years was the character of Lamb. To conclude, he says, "The lover of strong drink is an object of compassion to friends—of derision to foes; suspected by strangers, stared at by fools. He swallows draughts of life destroying wine, and mortgages miserable morrows for nights of madness. He bears about with him, the piteous spectacle of his own self ruin—the body of death, from which, with febler and febler out cry, he pines to be delivered. This unhappy man, calls upon the young, to stop before they are linked beyond the power of revocation, to soul destroying indulgence, before it is bone of their bone, and flesh of their flesh. He tells "them to take warning by his misery To clinch their teeth, and not undo them, To suffer wet damnation to pass through them."

C. F.

JANUARY FIRST 1873

Has dawned, and has broken the ice fetters in which the old year had bound our world. Notwithstanding the cold has been most intense, we have many blessings for which to thank our Father. Although affliction has sometimes come to us, it has come and has departed; while dear friends have been laid down to their long rest and leaving hearts bowed by deep sorrow for their loss. The first day of the year seems to be a suitable time for serious thought with young and old. It is the time for the father to reflect upon his own character, and his influence with his boys—whether he is leading them to a home above, or letting them wander in paths of sin. It is the day for the mother to consider whether she is training her young daughters to become useful

members in the kingdom of Christ, or whether this world and its enjoyments fills their hearts. It is proper for all to review the days and hours that have gone into eternity, bearing the impress of good or evil with regard to the future world. The years flit by silently as the snow flakes, but in passing, they form characters that will endure, when the heavens shall have passed away with a great noise, and the elements shall have melted with fervent heat. It is well to question our hearts, and ask what report, the year that has just departed "bore to Heaven."

When we remember it will be a witness against us, or in our favor, we must feel the importance of having improved its hours —of having spent it in a manner becoming the frail children of earth. Have we who profess to be the followers of Christ been governed by the precepts of his religion? Has our influence been pure? Have we led to the Savior souls, that otherwise would have gone on in the error of their ways?

Have we during the past year, improved our own hearts and lives? Are we more patient, humble and devoted to God? Do we shun what is wrong and follow what is lovely and of good report? Do we study the word of God, believing it to be *only* lamp of our feet, the *only* light to our path, as we walk on our way to the home above? No doubt, improvement has been made, but all have cause for regret. All have faults. and find it difficult to lay aside the sins that so easily beset the pathway of life, There is however, comfort, If we live humbly at the feet of the Savior, we have a sweet refuge when we most feel our own frailty, and the need of a rock that is higher than we, to shelter and shield us from sin and its suffering.

Young christians should study how they can most improve the year they have commenced—how they can become more devoted in heart and life to the Savior, who died for them. They may go on amid the cares and pleasures of life, forgetting that the deeds of the year have been written in the books, and if not blotted out, are to be read before the great white throne. I would ask them to approach often, and with humble confidence to a throne of grace. They have many temptations to draw them to a thoughtless world, and make them forgetful of their high calling, but if they wish to obtain a home of beauty, a mansion above, where there is peace, joy, love, where sorrow and care are not known, and death never comes, they must hold fast the profession of their faith unmoved.

C. F,

BE OBLIGING.

NOTHING gives more pleasure to the old, than to know the young people around them are kind and obliging. When the members of a family seek to oblige, by performing, every day, at home, little kind acts, there is true enjoyment among them. The father knows he may depend on his son to attend to any business that will relieve him of care, and it is a sweet relief when he is weary or overburdened. The mother who has taught her daughters to be affectionate and obliging, is often made glad by their tender care. She sits at her ease, while they are active and doing all they can for her comfort. I remember a family of seven daughters whose parents were not wealthy. They were bright, graceful girls, and from their early childhood, were taught to be useful and self-denying. If their mother were busy, it was pleasant to see them around her, "Let help you, Mamma, let me do this and you rest." They would persuade her to leave home, to visit her friends, that she might sometimes rest from her cares and labors, and all was in order at her return.

Their obliging behavior to their parents and to each other, was observed and spoken of with pleasure, and soon one by one, they left the home they had rendered so sweet, to grace other households. All I knew after their marriage, were skilled in the knowledge that makes families happy and comfortable. Their homes were such as children would look back to, amid the cares and sorrows of life, as the sweetest places of earth. In the old home, the disposition to oblige had been cultivated, and the same spirit pervaded the families that went out from it. To oblige others, was one of their enjoyments. A mother can do much to make her children obliging or selfish. How deeply she should feel her responsibility.

C. F.

SPIRITUAL INDICATIONS OF 1872.

WHILST we can rejoice in no very remarkable denominational movement, promising at least spiritual improvement, in the past year, there are most hopeful indications amongst, "The common people,"—the intelligent unofficials, and godly members—in all

the churches—in both the old and new world, which give bright promise as to the future. The Romish "mother of abominations,"—"drunk with the blood of saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus"—has continued to writhe under the "desolations and burnings" inflicted by the "peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues"—constituting, "The ten horns of the beast"—"into whose hearts, God has put to fulfill his will." Babylon, has become desperate in death struggles—is fast falling, and "The nations that, have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, are lamenting at the smoke of her burning," and the "Holy Apostles and Prophets" are rejoicing over hsr destruction. The true Israel of God,—genuine christians in all parts of the earth—will, ere long, rejoice together, as the "one family of the saints," in accomplishing the grave purposes of the "Prince of Peace." The predictions are clear, and the indications portending their fulfillment, are evidently apparent, in the wrecked and frail condition of human governments, and all moral organizations of men.

In most of the States of Europe and America, the masses of the common sense, thinking and plain people, who love God, are not only joyfully anticipating the overthrow of Anti-Christ; but they are expecting a much purer state of religious society. All who cheerfully study the promises of the Father, must necessarily come to this joyful conclusion.

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W. T. MOORE, Editor and Publisher,
Cineinnati, Ohio.

The Christian Quarterly is a work of marked ability.

Ed. of Historian.

Success of the Christian Religion in Mississippi.—Bro. W. T. Rowland, writes Dec. 15th, 1872, that, Brethren Lauderdale and T. W. Caskey, have been preaching the ancient Gospel, on the line of the Tennessee aod Miss. R. R. and a goodly number received and obeyed it.

REPORTS in regard to the success of the Gospel, have been very good in the past year.

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WE can but sincerely thank the friends of the RELIGIOUS HISTORIAN, for their promptness in ordering the work. With very slight additional efforts, the publication, will have quite a good circulation. For the short time it has been published, and the very small amount of labor that has been performed, to bring it before the readlng public, its success has certainiy been remarkable. Dear Brethren, and Friends, while we thank you, we trust, that while you are circulating the HISTORIAN, you are working in the cause of the Savior.

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